

SETTING OUR MINDS ON THINGS ABOVE....Col. 3:1-4

Intro:

- A. In tonight's lesson we will talk about building for eternity - as a complementary lesson to that thought of making choices - I want to focus on the subject of "setting our Mind's"
 1. In every sport that is participated in - the focus of the athlete is commonly heard as "keeping your eye on the ball".....etc.
 2. For the Christian our choice of heaven over hell is the right decision....but how do we keep focused with our eyes on the ball...?"
- B. This text is a discussion of life after death. ---- **Colossians 3:1-4** (NKJV) - 1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.
 1. However, this does not mean to say that it is speaking of our final death, wherein shall then come judgment...**Heb. 9:27**, but rather it is speaking of the life that we ought to live once we have died to sins in the waters of baptism.
 - a. **Hebrews 9:27** (NKJV) - 27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,
 2. When one is baptized into Christ he is baptized into His death...**Rom. 6:4** and buried with Him..**Col. 2:12**.
 - a. **Romans 6:4** (NKJV) - 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
 - (1) **Colossians 2:12** (NKJV) - 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.
 - b. But, we are also raised with Him...**Col.3:1** and since we are raised we thus have a NEW LIFE, and therefore we should study how we ought to act accordingly.
 3. Thus this text is an exhortation to those who are "called out" of the world known simply as Christians.
 - C. The text indicates that we are to ---"**seek things that are above where Christ is**"...that is to say, heavenly things.
 1. Here we are to set our minds above --- not on earth -- but rather we are to be spiritually minded people rather than physically minded people.
 - D. Thus the question that needs to be asked --- **WHAT IS INVOLVED IN SEEKING HEAVENLY THINGS?** and **WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SPIRITUALLY MINDED PEOPLE?**
 - E. In this mornings study will hopefully answer these two very important questions.
 - F. It is also a lesson that is intended to be an inward self examination:
 1. Not against other members or against human standards.
 2. But rather against the standard of God set forth for us in His word.
 - G. A Spiritually minded person is:

I. ONE WHO HAS A CONSTANT AWARENESS OF GOD'S PRESENCE.

- A. **The child of God needs to have thoughts of God through out the whole day....**God is to be our first thought in the morning when we awake and our last thought in the evening when we slump into blissful sleep.
 1. Everywhere we go or look **we should see the hand of our Father in it....cf Acts 17:27-28 ; Psal. 139:7-12, 17.**
 - a. **Acts 17:27-28** (NKJV) - 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'
 - b. **Psalms 139:7-12** (NKJV) - 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me; 12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You.
 - c. **Psalms 139:17** (NKJV) - 17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the

sum of them!

2. Look carefully at those men of the O.T. of whom it is said "they walked with God":
 - a. Noah walked with God...**Gen 6:9** (NKJV) - 9 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.
 - b. Enoch walked with God..**Genesis 5:24** (NKJV) - 24 And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.
 - c. David is said to have walked with God in all ways but one....**I Kings 15:3-5**.
 - (1) **1 Kings 15:3-5** (NKJV) - 3 And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David. 4 Nevertheless for David's sake the Lord his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem; 5 because David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.
3. The question to ask ourselves is whether I walk with God?
 - a. Do you live with God in your mind? or is God the furthestest thought from your mind?
 - b. Does God live in your Home? both physical and Spiritual....**I Cor. 6:19-20**.
 - (1) **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** (NKJV) - 19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.
- B. How does keeping God in our minds constantly help us in everyday life?
 1. Firstly it keeps us from sinning....**Heb. 4:13 ;Prov. 15:3**.
 - a. **Hebrews 4:13** (NKJV) - 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.
 - (1) **Proverbs 15:3** (NKJV) - 3 The eyes of the Lord are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good.
 - b. I firmly believe that the reason we sin is because we temporary forget that God is with us each and every waking hour and that He does see all that we do.
 - c. The omni-presence of God should be felt in our daily lives and it will keep us out of harms way.
 2. By keeping God before our eyes each and every day it encourages us to pray.....**cf Phil. 4:6-7**.
 - a. **Philippians 4:6-7** (NKJV) - 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
 - b. We fail to pray because our minds are consumed with earthly things and we forget God.
 - (1) Israel often forgot their God and they where punished severely.
 - (2) Just because we are not punished right away, many constantly forget their God in heaven.
 - (3) Can you imagine if your child only spoke to you three or four minutes every 2-3 weeks....would you say they loved You???
 - c. If we are constantly aware of God's presence we would be more mindful to talk to Him more.
 3. Keeps us mindful that God determines our life.
 - a. This does not imply that we are predestinated to do anything, nor that everything that we achieve or that happens to us is directly reacted to God helping us.
 - b. But rather as scripture says....**James 4:15** compared against **Luke 12:17-21**.
 - (1) **James 4:15** (NKJV) - 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."
 - (2) **Luke 12:17-21** (NKJV) - 17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' 21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."
 4. Gives us freedom from fear:
 - a. During natural calamities.....**Psa. 46:1-3**.
 - (1) **Psalms 46:1-3** (NKJV) - 1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah. A Song For Alamoth. God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; 3 Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling.

Selah

- b. **Of hateful men**, and those who persecute us...**Heb. 13:5-6 ; II Thess. 1:6-7.**
- (1) **Hebrews 13:5-6** (NKJV) - 5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we may boldly say: "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"
 - (2) **2 Thessalonians 1:6-7** (NKJV) - 6 since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, 7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,
- c. We **may die in natural calamities** or by the hand of godless men, but nothing can permanently harm our souls if God is before us always...**Matt. 10:28 ; Rom. 8:31 , 37-39.**
- (1) **Matthew 10:28** (NKJV) - 28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.
 - (2) **Romans 8:31** (NKJV) - 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?
 - (3) **Romans 8:37-39** (NKJV) - 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

II. **THE SPIRITUALLY MINDED PERSON IS ONE WHO HAS A LOVE AND A DEEP RESPECT FOR GOD'S WORD.**

- A. **The spiritually minded person respects and recognizes that the word of God is the COMPLETE REVELATION OF GOD'S WILL....II Tim. 3:16-17.**
1. **2 Timothy 3:16-17** (NKJV) - 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- B. **He accepts it as it is in TRUTH THE WORD of God.... I Thess. 2:13.**
1. **1 Thessalonians 2:13** (NKJV) - 13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.
 2. **What if God said out aloud here today...**"Ye who believes and is baptized shall be saved", would anyone dare say that it is unnecessary?
 - a. **And yet God has said that thru His inspired Word...Mk. 16:16.**
 3. **Spiritually minded people appreciate truth even when it hits home.**
 - a. They pray that the teacher, or in their daily study might say something that will help them in becoming better children of God.
 - b. It is only the weak in spirit that use statements as "The preacher is always picking on me." ; "Somebody must have told him something about me, that's why he is preaching on this subject!"
 - (1) This might well be the case but many times the Word of God has already spoken out against things that you might be engaged in, and preaching in it's true form will step on your toes when they are sticking out.
 4. **The spiritual meditate on the word of God daily... Psalms 1:1-3 ; 119:97.**
 - a. **Psalms 1:1-3** (NKJV) - 1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.
 - (1) **Psalms 119:97** (NKJV) - 97 Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.
 - b. The Bible comes into use in solving many of everyday life problems...**Rom. 15:4**
 - (1) **Romans 15:4** (NKJV) - 4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.
 - c. The Word of God is able to build us up and to give us an inheritance... **Acts 20:32 ; II Tim. 3:15 ; II Tim. 2:15.**
 - (1) **Acts 20:32** (NKJV) - 32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.
 - (2) **2 Timothy 3:15** (NKJV) - 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

- (3) **2 Timothy 2:15** (NKJV) - 15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

III. THE SPIRITUALLY MINDED PERSON HAS HIS HEART SET ON HEAVEN.

- A. The spiritually minded not only thinks on heavenly or spiritually matters now, but thinks often about "going home."the Apostle John looked forward to Christ's return...**Rev. 22:20**, so should also be our attitude.
1. **Revelation 22:20** (NKJV) - 20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!
 2. Like Abraham the spiritually minded person says..."This world is not my home, I'm just passing through"... **Heb. 11:9-10 ; 13-16**. ---- One of my favorite songs that we sing is based upon this scripture.... "Just a Cottage below."
 - a. **Hebrews 11:9-10** (NKJV) - 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.
 - b. **Hebrews 11:13-16** (NKJV) - 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.
- B. The material things of this life are immaterial to those who are spiritually minded.
1. He has learned the secret to ...**Matt. 6:33-34**.
 - a. **Matthew 6:33-34** (NKJV) - 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.
 2. And learnt from the example of Job...**Job 1:21**.
 - a. **Job 1:21** (NKJV) - 21 And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord."
 3. The spiritually minded person has learned to be content with the inadequacies of life realizing that there awaits him the promise of eternal rest with the Father in Heaven...**Phil. 4:11 ; II Cor. 4:16-17**.
 - a. **Philippians 4:11** (NKJV) - 11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:
 - b. **2 Corinthians 4:16-17** (NKJV) - 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

IV. BY HAVING OUR MINDS SET ON THINGS ABOVE IT HELPS US IN TIMES OF TEMPTATIONS AND IN THE MIDST OF TRAILS.

- A. The congregation here in Chester has undergone several tests and trails as do many congregation thru out this world, yet by keeping our minds focused upon Christ and His Word we have come thru.
1. I believe that these trails that we have faced are God's way of putting us to the test...cf **I Peter 1:6-7**.
 - a. **1 Peter 1:6-7** (NKJV) - 6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,
 - b. We are not to be weary in these trails but rather we are to rejoice...cf **I Peter 4:12-13**.
 - (1) **1 Peter 4:12-13** (NKJV) - 12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.
 2. We have to realize that some are destroyed by such trails....**Matt. 13:21**.
 - a. **Matthew 13:21** (NKJV) - 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.
 3. While others are made stronger...**James 1:2-4**.
 - a. **James 1:2-4** (NKJV) - 2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you

may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

- B. Let us continually give God the thanks that we are worthy to suffer and be tried for His cause... **Phil. 4:4.**
1. **Philippians 4:4** (NKJV) - 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

V. THE SPIRITUALLY MINDED PERSON SEEKS FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

- A. They seek peace...**Phil.4:6 ; I Peter 3:12.**
1. **Philippians 4:6** (NKJV) - 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
 2. **1 Peter 3:12** (NKJV) - 12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”
- B. Those who do so receive spiritual as well as physical blessing from God...**Eph. 1:3 ; Matt. 6:33 ; Luke 12:22-31.**
1. **Matthew 6:33** (NKJV) - 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.
 2. **Luke 12:22-31** (NKJV) - 22 Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. 23 Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? 25 And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 26 If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith? 29 “And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. 30 For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. 31 But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.
 3. They have a good life while on this earth...**Prov. 3:1-10.**
 - a. **Proverbs 3:1-10** (NKJV) - 1 My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; 2 For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you. 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart, 4 And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil. 8 It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones. 9 Honor the Lord with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase; 10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.
 - b. I have never seen a Christian go hungry, nor go without shelter, nor without clothing.
 4. They not only have it good here but also in the life to come...**Col. 3:4.**
 - a. **Colossians 3:4** (NKJV) - 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

VI. Conclusion:

- A. Spiritual mindedness comes with time, not overnight.
1. As one grows spiritually strong so does his spiritual mindedness.
 2. As Christians we should strive toward such a goal.
- B. The only way that this is accomplished is by, prayer, Bible study ; meditation ; assembly with other saints, and the constant encouragement of the brethren.
- C. Let us seek to be more spiritually minded, so we can enjoy this life here, as well as the life to come.

¹ The New King James Version. Nashville : Thomas Nelson, 1982